

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 HEW-08 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 PRS-01 RSC-01 SCA-01 USIA-12 IO-12

SCS-03 IGA-02 EB-11 TRSE-00 SCI-06 NASA-04 RSR-01

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R 242200 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4188

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: EAGR HO

SUBJECT: DROUGHT-- DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 070894

1. THE WATER EMERGENCY STEMMING FROM EXTENDED DROUGHT IN SOUTHERN HONDURAS APPEARS TO BE HEIGHTENING. THE GOVERNMENT DISASTER COMMITTEE APPEARS TO BE CONCENTRATING ITS EFFORTS IN ALLEVIATING THE SITUATION PRIMARILY IN AND AROUND TEGUCIGALPA BY DRILLING WELLS AND CONSTRUCTING TWO SMALL RESERVOIRS. ALSO THERE IS A PROJECT PLAN TO COLLECT WATER FROM THE OLD SAN JUANCITO GOLD MINE. THIS EMERGENCY PLAN IS BEING IMPLEMENTED BY SANAA WITH THE HOPE THAT THE WATER SITUATION IN TEGUCIGALPA CAN BE ALLEVIATED UNTIL THE GUACERIQUE PROJECT ENTERS INTO OPERATION IN 1979-1980. THE FIRST PHASE OF THE PROJECT IS SCHEDULED TO PROVIDE WATER FOR DIFFERENT HOSPITAL FACILITIES IN THE TEGUCIGALPA AREA. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED UNOFFICIALLY THAT SANAA REQUIRED SEVERAL PIECES OF EQUIPMENT SUCH AS PUMPS, SPARE PARTS, AND VEHICLES.

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2. ALTHOUGH VARIOUS CABINET MEMBERS HAVE INFORMALLY INDICATED NEED FOR ASSISTANCE, THE EMBASSY HAS NOT AS YET RECEIVED A FORMAL REQUEST FROM THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR ANY TYPE OF DISASTER RELIEF. WE PREFER TO WAIT FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE DISASTER PLAN AND FOR A SPECIFIC REQUEST FROM THE GOH BEFORE WE SUBMIT ANY SPECIFIC REQUEST FOR USG ASSISTANCE.

3. WE HAVE DISCUSSED USE OF ERTS IMAGERY BOTH WITH IAGS AND THE U. S. FIRM WHICH IS ASSISTING IN THE PILOT CADASTER PROJECT. UNDERSTAND THAT USE OF ERTS IMAGERY COULD ONLY BE OF ASSISTANCE ON LONGER RANGE WATER PROBLEM HERE, I. E., IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR SIMILAR PROBLEM WHICH MIGHT EVOLVE NEXT YEAR. QUITE POSSIBLE THEREFORE THAT USAID MAY HAVE IN- HOUSE CAPABILITY TO INTERPRET ERTS IMAGERY AND PROVIDE ONSITE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SHOULD IT BE REQUESTED. IF ERTS WILL PROVIDE AID WITH 14 IMAGES FREE OF CHARGE, WE WOULD APPRECIATE THEM BEING SENT TO HONDURAS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

4. NORTH COAST AREA OF HONDURAS HAS NOT BEEN SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THE DROUGHT AND WE ASSUME THAT MAJOR PROBLEMS EMANATING FROM DROUGHT WILL BE FOR POTABLE WATER IN URBAN CENTERS, MAINLY TEGUCIGALPA, AND TO AGRICULTURE IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY. I FEEL IT PRUDENT TO AWAIT A SPECIFIC REQUEST FROM THE GOH BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION.
DECONTROL 12/3/73.
RYAN

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NMAFVVZCZ

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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